Railway Projects in Assam

2712. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of railway projects in the country particularly in the State of Assam completed during the last three years;

(b) the total funds allotted and spent on these projects;

(c) the details of new rail projects formulated and to be taken up for the development of Guwahati station during the current year; and

(d) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The total of 3635 Kms. of new lines, gauge conversion and doublings have been completed on Indian Railways during last three years, i.e. 2002-03,2003-04 & 2004-05. These include 259 Kms. on New Jalpaiguri-New Bongaigaon gauge conversion project falling partly in the State of Assam.

(b) The total expenditure incurred on new line, gauge conversion and doublings in last three years is Rs. 9530.43 crore (provisional).

(c) No new projects for development of Guwahati station in the current year is planned.

(d) Does not arise.

Freight Corridor Project

2713. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Japan agreed to extend a loan of Rs. 18,700 crores to India for Freight Corridor Project;

(b) if so, the terms of the loan; and

(c) the details of the freight corridor proposed to be constructed with the help of the loan, the period required for its completion and by when it would become operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. It has been agreed between the Govt, of India and Japan in the Joint Statement of the two Prime Ministers signed on 29.04.2005 that the feasibility of a dedicated high axle load freight corridor project for Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Howrah sectors of Indian Railways utilizing the Japanese STEP (Special Terms of Economic Partnership) YEN loan shall be examined. A proposal for carrying out a development study for the dedicated freight corridor project has since been posed to Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on 07.07.2005.

(b) There is no offer of loan so far. However, normally under the STEP Yen loan scheme, 30% of the loan would be tied to procurement from Japan. The loan covers up to 85% of the total project cost with an interest rate of 0.4% per annum and repayment period of 40 years including 10 years grace period.

(c) Does not arise.

Broad gauge conversion of Gandhinagar-Palanpur rail line

2714. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) when conversion of metre gauge to broad work has started between Gandhinagar and Palanpur in Western Railway;

(b) the stipulated period in which this work was to be completed;

(c) the other investing partners in this work; and

(d) how much amount is allocated for this work and how much has been spent by 31st October, 2005?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Gandhinagar and Palanpur are already connected by broad gauge line. The reference is, perhaps, to Gandhidham-Palanpur gauge conversion which was included in the Budget 1998-99.

(b) Palanpur-Samakhiali (248 Kms) is targeted for completion during 2005-06 and balance Samakhiali-Gandhidham in 2006-07.

(c) The investing partners in this project are Government of Gujarat, Kandla Port Trust, Gujarat Adani Port Limited and Rail Vikas Nigam Limited.